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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/752,890	01/07/2004	Richard H. Bossi	038190/269130	4562

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EXAMINER

CHAPMAN JR, JOHN E

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2856

DATE MAILED: 03/22/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/752,890

Applicant(s)

BOSSI ET AL.

Examiner

John E. Chapman

Art Unit

2856

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-22 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1, 10-12 and 20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2-9, 13-19, 21 and 22 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 1/7/04.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

2. Claims 1, 12 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Kennedy et al.

The applied reference has a common inventor with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) might be overcome either by a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not the invention “by another,” or by an appropriate showing under 37 CFR 1.131.

Kennedy et al. discloses a driven probe (actuating portion) 14 having at least one magnet 18, and a tracking probe (inspecting portion) 16 having an inspection sensor 20 and at least one magnet 18.

Regarding claim 12, the inspection sensor may comprise a camera (column 6, line 67).

3. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Kennedy et al.

The applied reference has a common inventor with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art only under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) might be overcome by: (1) a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not an invention "by another"; (2) a showing of a date of invention for the claimed subject matter of the application which corresponds to subject matter disclosed but not claimed in the reference, prior to the effective U.S. filing date of the reference under 37 CFR 1.131; or (3) an oath or declaration under 37 CFR 1.130 stating that the application and reference are currently owned by the same party and that the inventor named in the application is the prior inventor under 35 U.S.C. 104, together with a terminal disclaimer in accordance with 37 CFR 1.321(c). For applications filed on or after November 29, 1999, this rejection might also be overcome by showing that the subject matter of the reference and the claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person. See MPEP § 706.02(l)(1) and § 706.02(l)(2).

The only difference between the claimed invention and the prior art consists in the type of the ultrasonic transducer employed. It is well known in the art to use a laser ultrasonic transducer in order to provide a non-contact arrangement and avoid having to provide a coupling medium. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use a laser ultrasonic transducer in the inspection device of Kennedy et al. in order to provide a non-contact arrangement and avoid having to provide a coupling medium.

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4. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Kennedy et al. in view of Clark et al.

The only difference between the claimed invention and the prior art consists in providing a positional encoder to monitor the positioning of the probe. Kennedy et al. teach recording the relative position of the tracking probe (column 9, lines 56-60). It is well known in the art to provide a position encoder in order to monitor the position of a probe, as taught by encoder 92 of Clark et al. Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide the probe 14 of Kennedy et al. with a positional encoder in order to monitor the relative position of the probes on the surface of a structure 12.

5. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

6. Claims 1, 11, 12 and 20 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 15-17 and 29 of U.S. Patent No. 6,722,202 ('202). Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the only difference between claim 1 and claim 15 of '202

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consists in providing the sensing element on the tracking probe (inspecting portion), which is one of the alternatives provided in claim 15, lines 17-20. Note that the actuating portion is “structured for placement on a surface of a structure” (claim 1, line 4), so that it inherently comprises a “contact member for contacting the first surface of the structure” (claim 15, line 4).

Regarding claim 11, the only difference between the claimed invention and claim 17 of ‘202 consists in the type of the ultrasonic transducer employed. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to use a laser ultrasonic transducer in the inspection device of ‘202 in order to provide a non-contact arrangement and avoid having to provide a coupling medium.

Regarding claim 12, claim 16 or ‘202 recites a camera.

Regarding claim 20, the only difference between claim 1 and claim 29 of ‘202 consists in receiving ultrasonic signals with the tracking probe (i.e., providing an inspection sensor on the inspecting portion), which is one of the alternatives provided.

7. Claim 10 is rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 15 of ‘202 in view of Clark et al. The only difference between the claimed invention and claim 15 of ‘202 consists in providing a positional encoder to monitor the positioning of the probe, which would have been obvious in view of encoder 92 of Clark et al.

8. Claims 2-9, 13, 14, 16-19, 21 and 22 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

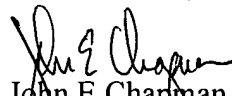
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9. Claim 15 is objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate of claim 5.

When two claims in an application are duplicates or else are so close in content that they both cover the same thing, despite a slight difference in wording, it is proper after allowing one claim to object to the other as being a substantial duplicate of the allowed claim. See MPEP § 706.03(k).

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John E. Chapman whose telephone number is (571) 272-2191. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hezron Williams can be reached on (571) 272-2208. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


John E Chapman
Primary Examiner
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